

Note: The following example policy is a **best practice**. Please modify or delete content to these policies as deemed necessary.

Employee Participation

Note: While safety and health committees are not required by law (with the exception of employers covered by N.C. Gen. Stat. 95-251), the following can be used as a statement when the company has a voluntary safety and health committee and is an example of how the committee members may be selected and function within the company. Alternative methods may be used as well.

Safety and Health Committees and Meetings

Employers can form safety and health committees to help employees and management work together to identify safety and health problems, develop solutions, review incident reports, and evaluate the effectiveness of the safety and health program. The committee should be made up of management-designated representatives and employee-elected representatives from all areas within the company.

Employees from each operational unit, division or area may volunteer or be nominated from among themselves to be a representative on the committee. If there is only one volunteer or nomination, the employees may approve the person by voice vote at a short meeting called for that purpose. If there is more than one volunteer or nomination, a secret paper ballot may be used to elect the representative.

Elected representatives will serve for *(insert number of years)* year(s) before being re-elected or replaced. If there is a vacancy then an election will be held before the next scheduled meeting to fill the balance of the term. (It is recommended that members serve two years, with half of the members replaced after the first year when the initial committee is formed, so that there are carry-over members on the committee at all times).

In addition to the employee-elected representatives, management should designate no more than three representatives but a minimum of one who will serve until replaced by management. Management representation should not outnumber employee representation. If the company employs a medical professional on staff, it is recommended that this individual serve on the safety and health committee as well but at least an individual who manages the workers' compensation, injury and illness, and first aid logs, such as the company safety and health manager.

A chairperson should be selected by a majority vote by the committee members each year. If there is a vacancy, the same method should be used to select a replacement.

The duties of safety and health committee members include:

- Conducting a monthly self-inspection of the area they represent.
- Communicating with the employees they represent on safety and health issues.
- Encouraging safe work practices among co-workers.
- Reviewing the injury, illness and first aid logs for trends and conducting a separate investigation of any incident (if determined appropriate).
- Providing any recommendations to management for consideration.

The safety and health committee should meet at least *(insert frequency)*. Each area committee member should bring information from the monthly inspections of their areas and any concerns from the employees in the area they represent. Using this information, the committee can help identify safety and health problems, develop solutions, review incident reports, provide training, and evaluate the effectiveness of the safety and health program.

A committee member will be designated to keep minutes. A copy of the minutes will be posted in a place where all affected employees have access to them. The company should archive meeting minutes for a specified period of time such as one year for follow-up/review purposes. (The company may choose to post minutes on employee bulletin boards, on an intranet, etc. Additionally, the company may choose to archive such records electronically.)